

METHOD FOR BRIDGING CONTROL POINT DATA FRAMES USING A NETWORK PROCESSOR

ABSTRACT OF THE INVENTION

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Certain Layer 3 protocol data frames propagated on a network are typically processed by a control point (CP) in a network switch. The logical bridging and routing functions required in this processing typically entail network device address look-ups in routing tables and 10 address databases. Using the CP to perform these look-ups is expensive in terms of processor cycles and memory. To offload the CP, the bridging functions are performed a network processor in the switch. The network processor has specialized software and hardware enabling it to perform the required database look-ups faster 15 and more efficiently than the CP.